/17 cont./

are not going to talk about what we have heard; we have lived long years with the Indians and we speak from daily, intimate experience, which obliges us to speak the truth even though bullets may keep on flying.

We have not come to break spears in favor of the Indians, but in favor of the truth. This idea of the innate laziness of the Indians we believe to be the twin sister of the "black legend" about the Spaniards, against which of little avail have been the voices of Maetzu, Juderías, Bayle, Lummis, etc. Perhaps the voice of the missionary, so often accused of being blinded by affection, may also be scorned and turn out to have been preaching in the desert, but, anyway, magis amica veritas.

38. A very different matter, with which we shall not here deal, is the physical endurance and useful labor of the Indians, which gave rise to the bringing of Negroes for the working of the mines and the sugar mills. Also different is the other question of malnutrition or incomplete nutrition and the degeneration produced by alcoholism, malaria, etc., although they have a bearing upon the main point we are dealing with here. Speaking of useful labor, I do note that, with regard to the Guaraúno, the Rev. Fr. Gaspar de Pinilla, a missionary among them, has often told me that in the handling of the axe, canoe paddle, and dragging of temiche /18/, he would not exchange them for any Negro or Creole, despite the fact that the Guaraúno are among those most accused of being slothful and lazy. The same can be said of the Pemón of the Gran Sabana with respect to traveling with burdens, construction of huts, etc., that is to say, everything that makes up their daily life and their own activity.

People who often speak, to relieve their overflowing impatience on trips, against the sluggishness, stoicity, laziness, etc., of the long-suffering Indians, two days later, when the discomforts have now disappeared, can be heard to outdo themselves in praise of how fine they are for carrying and a thousand other things.

basket (see "Textiles"), woven so as to be extensible, closed at one end and open at the other. Each end has a strong basketwork loop. The tangõi' is filled and the loop at the open (upper) end hung over a protruding beam — such beams are specially provided in the dwelling, workhouse, or both. A pole is then passed through the lower loop and one end tied to an upright post. The preparer (always a woman) then sits on the other end, thus extending the tangõi' and causing it to squeeze the grated casave. The liquid runs out the bottom and is saved.

The nearly dry meal is then sifted through a rectangular basketwork sieve, pangai' (see "Textiles") and is forthwith patted into a thin layer on a large flat stove, puitari, under which a fire is built. The resulting large, thin, circular cake is the casave bread, or casave properly speaking, eke. It is somewhat soft when fresh, but may be dried for conservation and then becomes very hard. To the unaccustomed palate it tastes like a fairly good grade of sawdust, but those who eat it regularly maintain that it has a distinct and agreeable flavor. It is the principal food of the Kamarakotos.

Some of the more southern tribes roast the sifted meal and so preserve it without baking it into loaves or sheets, but the Kamarakotos do not do this.

Among other dishes, first place must be given to a sort of soup or thin stew, kumasa, the so-called "pepper-pot" of travelers, universal among Caribs. This is cooked in an earthenware pot over a firehole. There are innumerable varieties of this dish, which consists of water and peppers, with anything else that happens to be at hand, bits of meat or fish, bones, casave meal, bananas or plantains, etc.

Casave juice, kumachi, is added to this or to any boiled dish as a sort of condiment.[121] Varieties in which any ingredient, other than pepper, predominates may be specially named, e.g. kuratano-kumasa, "plantain soup or stew," just as we name soups. Vegetables, particularly roots like the varieties of Dioscorea, are often boiled whole or in large pieces instead of being mashed into a kumasa. This dish is called putosa, e.g. napuei-putosa, boiled mapueyes. The root vegetables and plantains are also roasted in hot ashes, pusa, e.g. piricha-pusa, roasted yams.

Aside from its use, principally as scraps and bones, in kumasa, meat may be boiled, woto-erindasa, or roasted on a sort of tripod over the fire, woto-kambwõ.

There is no local source of salt and long periods may pass without any being used, but the Kamarakotos are eager for it and have long traded for it through neighboring tribes. Even when available it is used sparingly and the Indians found most of our food so salty as to be inedible. Much of their food is so peppery as to be inedible to us, and the extensive use of peppers doubtless counteracts the flatness of unsalted food. Their root vegetables doubtless naturally contain enough salts to sustain life.

121 [see footnote on p. 321, category 11b – Analyst]